

THE COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Date: March 2024

Editor: D. Mills

Hello Bethany!



This is our monthly newsletter. This serves as a snapshot of what is happening for our community of faith.

You are encouraged to share a story or announcement.

Send along an email to office@bethanyunitedchurch.ca or contact us at 902-455-0521, x. 221.

The deadline for April 2024 newsletter submissions:

Wednesday,
March 20th by Noon.

*If you or know of someone who would like to receive a hard copy of this newsletter, let us know!
We will saddle up our snails!

Guess the Phrase

Send an email with your response:
office@bethanyunitedchurch.ca

pro mise

Answer will be shared in

April 2024 Community Spirit

BULLETIN FROM THE BOARD OF MANAGERS

Bethany is a busy place and that means things may get broken or wear out.

It is important that routine maintenance takes place and items are repaired or replaced.

Routine maintenance projects are usually carried out by the caretaker and volunteers. Funding for this work comes from the operating budget.

The BOM may also hire contractors to carry out minor projects. In 2023, Bethany used contractors to undertake drywall repairs and painting of ceilings in various rooms and hallways throughout the facility.

This year will see the BOM engaging a contractor to install motion activated lighting for the hallway from the Ladies Parlour to the Joseph Howe entrance.

~ Sincerely submitted by Betty Tozer,
Communication Representative

Safe Ministry Update

Parking Lots

Bethany has many entrance points as was noted last month. We have two primary parking lots – 2669 Joseph Howe and 7171 Clinton. Monday to Friday, 6am-6pm, we rent out 62 parking spaces to our neighbours at IMP Group Ltd. Please refrain from parking in those designated spots in the 7171 Clinton lot through the week. There are 9 designated spaces and 2 accessible spaces for Bethany United Church staff, volunteers, and visitors use on this side of the complex, plus the 11 spaces and 2 accessible spaces in the 2669 Joseph Howe lot.

Message from Executive Board

Well, February was an “interesting” and challenging month with lots of weather issues! This lead unfortunately to cancellations of events which were anticipated by many. The blessing, of course, is that we have March now arriving with the promise of more activities to attend given the rebooking that will occur!

We must all thank the organizers of our many Faith Community activities for their efforts on our behalf but also taking on the leadership of making the tough decisions to alter plans when necessary. We all support them in this challenging responsibility! Also special thank you to all staff and volunteers who worked diligently to keep our facility safe and clear of snow.

In the near future, the Executive Board will be deliberating on how best to approach the development of our Community of Faith Profile for the UCC---this will be a chance for widespread involvement and input from our Faith Community.

Also upcoming is the Annual General Meeting which will be held in early April and special thanks to all who have been providing Dana with documentation for the Annual Report. Also thank you for your support of the “Have a Heart Campaign.”

Once again, the value of our exemplary Audio-Visual Team was evident given the need to rely on virtual presentations due to weather issues.

I know that we are all looking forward to spring and we wish all of you Blessings as we proceed through Lent to the Passion of the Easter Story!

Blessings to all...

Charles Maxner & Glen Knapp

Co-Chairs

Guess the Phrase

HUG

ANSWER:
BIG HUG

Congratulations to:
Ruth DeVenne

☺ Holy Humour



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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Monday -Friday 10am-3pm.

Our hearts, minds and spirit are all open.

Along with our physical space.

Expect when you visit to continue to adhere to precautionary measures and good health screening checks to occur throughout common areas of the building to reduce exposure to COVID-19 and to assist with safety of all. Please do your when visiting the church for worship or attending a planned ministry opportunity or meeting. The Board of Managers require all to adhere to the procedures in our church complex as recommended by Nova Scotia Public Health and our In-Person Implementation Team (IPIT). **Call 902-455-0521 to reach:**

- **Pastoral Care/Lead Minister: Kevin Little x.222 (or Press 1)**
- **Ministry Resource: Dana Mills x. 221 (or Press 2)**
- **Building Care: James Sweet (Caretaker) & Board of Managers x. 221 (or Press 2)**
- **Finance: Tina Gascon x. 225 (or Press 3)**
- **Ministry of Music: Shawn Whynot x.223 (or Press 4)**
- **Children & Family Care: Louisa Duck x. 224 (or Press 5)**
- **Community Engagement: Ann Bradley x. 227 (or Press 6)**

READ ALL SIGNS AT ALL ENTRANCE POINTS.

THEY HAVE BEEN PLACED THERE BY GOD'S LOVE.

CLEAN HANDS – KEEP SPACE FROM OTHERS – SCREEN YOUR HEALTH – BE KIND

THINGS TO KNOW FROM THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Ever wonder what P.I.E. Day is all about?

Visit this page of the UCC website

to watch last year's Moderator's Message:

<https://united-church.ca/news/moderators-pie-day-message-2023>

The 6th Annual National Affirming/PIE Day is coming up on March 14th!

PIE is not just a delicious dessert – it's also an acronym that stands for Public, Intentional, and Explicit, an important day of recognition and action for the UCC. Leadership encourages individuals and communities of faith to have conversations, dream big, and commit to taking another faithful step in the journey to embody the expansive love of God for Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+ people. A new message will be shared around this year's theme...

“PIE in the Public Square.” Watch for it and other opportunities!

SUNDAY MORNINGS @ BETHANY UNITED CHURCH

WORSHIP SERVICE @ 10:30am

In-Person - In Community – In Safe Ministry

The service will be streamed LIVE via our YouTube channel. Subscribe today: “BETHANY UNITED HALIFAX.” The link will also be uploaded to our website for recorded viewing. www.bethanyunitedchurch.ca



SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 10:30am

We are excited to welcome children and their families to our spirit-filled weekly ministry and life-giving learning space.

Register with Louisa @ lduck@bethanyunitedchurch.ca

(Sunday School is for children ages 3 to grade 9)

Entrance to access the Gymnasium is 2669 Joseph Howe Drive (ramp door)

MONTHLY QUOTE

“Paint your own rainbow. (Even if it’s wonky.)”

~ Unknown

Prayer for March 2024

Creator,

Thank You for fearfully and wonderfully creating each of us. Thank You for giving us worth in Your eyes. Help us live as the one You uniquely intended us to be. Help us abide instead of striving, living peacefully and joyfully as heirs to Your Kin-dom and co-heirs with Christ.

In Jesus’ Name,

Amen.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MINISTRY



Bethany Meditation Group (20 minutes silent meditation, with some preamble...). 8-week session, WEDNESDAYS at noon, January 31 to March 27.

The meditation sessions are led by Yvonne Macor, based on 35 years experience studying Yoga, Vedic knowledge, Buddhist and Christian methods, and meditation retreats.

JOY Luncheon (Just Older Youth) next happens **Tuesday March 5th at Noon, in the Fellowship Hall.** Join us for a light lunch and guest speaker for \$10. Gluten free option upon request.

Guest Speaker: Dave Kilgour, Community Manager, Square Roots, Fairview/Clayton Park.

“Everyone needs to eat. This non-profit organization aims to redirect perfectly good food that would be thrown away, into the hands of those in need within these communities. They tackle the issues of food waste and insecurity with a heartwarming social mindfulness.”

Wednesday Drop In/ Walk and Talk at **10 -11:30am.** You are invited to come and walk our maze of hallways for exercise now that the weather is getting colder. If walking is not your thing just drop in for a cup of coffee, tea or a healthy smoothie and friendly conversation in our Fellowship Hall. Kevin will join us the first Wednesday of each month. He brings a question for us to ponder and discuss. We look forward to seeing you. Please use the ramp entrance at 2669 Joseph Howe Drive.

YOUTH GROUP Sunday Evenings from 7:00pm – 8:30pm. (September - June)
This is an opportunity for youth in Junior and Senior High School to expand and deepen their faith in a safe and faithful community of peers. Each evening begins with a group check-in and a theme-based discussion with a related activity such as an outreach project; followed by a time of hanging out and eating snacks, which are available for purchase. For the rest of the evening, we play games, everything from crazy run around games to community building games.

Community Health Team Programs

Our space plays host to a variety of these free health and wellness programs in the coming months. Visit Bethany's Community Opportunities/Events website page to link you to this information, to register to attend, or email them at cht@nshealth.ca. For further assistance, call 902-460-4560 (greater HRM area) or toll free at 1-844-460-4555.

There are also online health and wellness program options as well:
<https://library.nshealth.ca/HealthyLiving/RegisterForPrograms>

Music Ministry

The Bethany **Handbell Choir** enjoys ringing the wonderful brass handbells that create a rich and beautiful sound. This choir also enjoys ringing a great variety of musical styles from a multitude of time periods. This choir rehearses on **Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM** in the **Sanctuary**.

The **Senior Choir** is Bethany's Adult Choir open to all ages. If you enjoy singing in a group, why not give us a try. Fun Fact: Only a portion of the choir members are able to read music, many of them listen and learn the notes by ear. The choir is a fun, social, and enthusiastic group that likes to explore a variety of musical styles. We rehearse on **Thursday evenings from 7:30 - 8:30 PM** in the **Fellowship Hall**.

If you are interested in joining one of the groups above please speak to Shawn Whynot, Director of Music.



STAY TUNED... more information to be shared about the Spring 2024 session of the “Bethany Pluckers” – our very own ukulele group!



Offering Envelopes STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY At Bethany we have many options for members/adherents and visitors to contribute to the life and work of our faith community. All donors are assigned a number when a donation is received and will be eligible for an official receipt at the end of the year.

Many regular donors choose to give weekly through our contribution envelopes. **2024 ENVELOPES** are available for pick up starting from the church office during open hours or on Sunday mornings before or after the worship service in the Narthex.

If you are currently set up to receive a boxed set, but either wish to switch to PAR (monthly giving via direct deposit) or stop receiving these sets and simply give as you are able, please contact Tina Gascon, x. 225 so she can assist and make desired changes. Unused envelopes can be returned to the church office.

We try to remain focused with recycling and reduce our impact on Creation.

2024 Transfer of Membership

We welcome all who are interested in joining the UCC or in transferring their membership to Bethany from another community of faith. If anyone would like to know more, please contact Kevin Little, 902-455-0521, x. 222 or kevin.little@eastlink.ca and you can discuss the specifics. It is an easy process. All people who gather at Bethany United Church for their spiritual care are part of our church family.

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LOCAL OUTREACH

THANK YOU for your **continued support with our efforts to collect items that are needed throughout the greater community.** Your donations are greatly appreciated! The following donation items can be placed in the main entranceway of the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings or at the Joseph Howe entrance through the week during office hours 10:00 – 3:00 PM

Dignity. Period. A campaign to help people with periods in Nova Scotia afford the menstrual products they need. Donations of pads, tampons, and menstrual cups are welcome and will be disbursed to local food banks.

Food Bank Donations: Non-perishable food items with a particular need for nutritious items such as canned beans and legumes, vegetables and vegetable soup, canned fruit, pasta, canned tomatoes, rice, rice noodles, nut butters and whole grain breakfast cereals. Any donation you are able to make would be greatly appreciated.

***New* Clothing Items for the Winter Months: Hats, Mittens, Gloves, Scarves, Socks and Undergarments (all sizes W, M, Children).**

A hamper is in place in the Narthex (the main entrance of the Sanctuary) until the end of March. Your donation is greatly appreciated and will be delivered to various agencies to support those in need.

Have A Heart Campaign Thank you Bethany for your generous donations during the month of February funds will be donated to Brunswick Street Mission, where staff and volunteers work very hard to provide supplies and support to persons living rough. An update on amount raised will be provided in the weeks ahead.

St. Andrew's Sunday Supper - March 24th, 2024

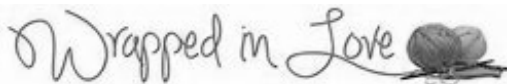
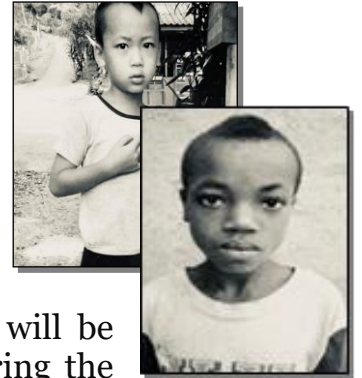
It is Bethany's turn to provide casseroles for the weekly supper at St. Andrew's on March 26th. The casserole on the menu is **Pineapple Chicken Casserole**. We are in need of **20 casseroles** to be made for that day with a **3:00 drop –off at St. Andrew's United Church.** If you are able to support this outreach ministry by making a casserole, please contact Ann Bradley by March 18th. You will be provided with the recipe and further details. abradley@bethanyunitedchurch.ca or 902-455-052, ex. 227. ***Donations of fresh fruit for the supper would be much appreciated. You can bring them to Bethany Sunday morning Nov. 26th. A drop off box will also be located at the Joe Howe entrance from 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM following worship. Clementines, apples, & oranges are requested. No bananas please.***

Children and Family Care Ministry

Contact Louisa Duck for more information.

FOSTER FAMILY

Bethany United Church sponsors two children for Plan International Canada Ltd. Our Sunday School welcome all contributions in support of these beautiful beings over the year. Because of our care both, **Bayene & Phongsaphak**, and the community they live have a better life with access to quality education, clean water, latrines and sanitation systems, basic healthcare, and family livelihood. We do hope you will consider giving to this cause. Every cent collected will be counted. Please consider regularly giving to this ministry during the 2024 year. Our Sunday School appreciates the support of all who have donated to date.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Did you know Bethany United Church has a prayer shawl ministry? These are distributed over the year to those in need of support, celebrating an achievement, or to those we baptize. We often hear from those who have received prayer shawls attesting to the comfort they bring. We are always grateful for donations of these as well as materials and supplies needed to make these. Louisa Duck is the contact for this ministry, and she also has materials and supplies if you have the time and talent to share.

Funeral Reception Ministry

The Rev. Ewen Moase Fellowship Hall provides a beautiful space for a reception. At Bethany we have a ministry offering to grieving families. This ministry is funded entirely by donations and members of our community of faith volunteer to serve. If you feel called to contribute to this important hospitality ministry and taking part on a funeral ministry team might seem like a good fit, please contact Louisa Duck, for more information on how to lend a hand.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY – Earl & Janet Reid Scholarship

In memory of the late Earl & Janet Reid, dedicated Bethany members, this fund is to help United Church parishioners in the Halifax area attend post-secondary education. Visit Community Foundation of Nova Scotia for details.

<https://cfns.ca/earleandjanetreidscholarship/>

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Minister's Ministry (Kevin Little)

Faith Study Series 2024

The Year of Living Biblically:

One Man's Humble Quest to Follow the Bible as Literally as Possible

Tuesdays @ 7-8 pm

February 6 – (taking a break in Holy Week) to April 30

In-person MacKinnon Chapel, ZOOM participation available (link to be provided).

There are many scholarly texts that attempt to wrestle with so-called. Biblical literalism. I have used many of these in faith studies over my thirty-year career as a United Church ordained minister. But these texts rarely connect to the real-life questions mainline church members have about whether the Bible can be, should be, taken literally.

Bestselling journalist (not a theologian or Biblical scholar) AJ Jacobs attempts to live the Bible literally, chronicling his experience in 12 monthly chapters. Critics enjoyed the book, which includes some humour in the situations that Jacobs creates. If you have ever wondered, "Is it possible to live the Bible literally?", now is your opportunity to learn for yourself and engage friends and family should the question emerges.

Participants do not need to buy or have the book. A summary of each chapter will be provided.

For more information on this study please contact Kevin Little, 902-817-2782 or kevinlittle@eastlink.ca.

MINISTER MUSINGS is a daily blog by Kevin...

<https://www.bethanyunitedchurch.ca/ministers-blog/>

Pastoral Care If you need to see him in-person, he is available, "I am always here for you..." If a phone call would be helpful, let him know. If you email him, you will receive a response quickly. He is not hard to reach. His cell number is 902-817-2782.

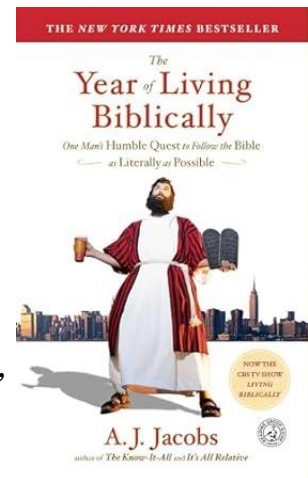


MacKinnon Unit of the United Church Woman will meet on

Thursday, March 21st in the Ladies Parlour at 1:30pm.

Two entrance points via the 2669 Joseph Howe Drive entrance ramp door or 7171 Clinton Avenue parking lot doors. (Park in designated church parking spaces only.) Public health protocols at that time will be followed.

This is the only women's group meeting regularly at Bethany. All women interested in getting together are very welcome. For further details speak with Kathy Brown or Zenora Rackham.





God's Love Is Wider

Bethany's Affirming Working Group will be hosting workshops and events in the upcoming months as we continue our journey of exploring what it means to be an Affirming Congregation. Please stay tuned for further details. For more information regarding Affirm United, available resources and upcoming events, please visit our **Affirming Ministry** page on our Bethany website

<https://www.bethanyunitedchurch.ca/affirming-ministry>.

The Affirming Working Group can be reached at bethanyaffirming@gmail.com. We welcome any questions, opinions or concerns you may wish to share with the committee. If you are interested in being a contributing member of this committee, please let us know.

Save the dates: Wednesday March 20th & 27th
at 7pm in the Fellowship Hall

Please join us for a two-part series with Tamsin Robson & Kathleen Robson as we continue to hear personal stories and learn more about the LGBTQIA+ community and the United Church of Canada.

Do you know a busy bee that might like to spend the day focusing on teamwork and kindness?

Check out this opportunity in support of a worldly cause.

We'll make a commitment to bee-ing good keepers of nature.

Bethany United Church
2669 Joseph Howe Drive
Spirited Kids Retreat – Thursday April 4, 2024
Ages 4 – 11 years 9am – 4pm
Drop off starting at 8:30am Pick up by 4:30pm
Registration Fee: \$25 (includes lunch/snacks; space is limited.)
Are you 12 -15 years old and wish to develop leadership skills?
We are looking for YOU to "BEE" involved!
*\$10 of every registration will go to supporting our foster children.



Theme Based Day Camp
"BEE-Day @ Bethany"
Buzz in for a day of fun and friendship on a PD Day!
Contact Louisa Duck @ lduck@bethanyunitedchurch.ca
(902) 455-0521, x. 224
Registration deadline: March 28, 2024

Visit our website: www.bethanyunitedchurch.ca

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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Monday -Friday 10am-3pm.



The **Men's Club** will meet **Wednesday, March 6th** in the **Fellowship Hall** at **6pm** for **6:30pm**.

Our speaker for the evening will be retired Honorary Norwegian Consul for Nova Scotia, Steinar Engeset, an expert in two fascinating historic subjects: "Camp Norway" in Lunenburg, and World War II convoys. In 1992, Steinar established the Camp Norway Foundation to commemorate war veterans who served at Lunenburg's "Camp Norway" during World War II. He is also the Chair of the Convoy Cup Foundation, created in 2002 to honour contributions of the courageous veterans of Canadian, Norwegian and international navies, merchant navies, and air forces who made possible the convoys that literally kept the Allied war effort alive in Europe during WWII. This is a not-to-be-missed opportunity for fellowship and learning.

The Men's Club is back in full force, with many men signing up for a year's subscription. However, all men are welcome even if without a subscription. Bethany men who are not subscribers are welcome to attend Men's Club meetings at a cost of \$20.00, payable at the door. Everyone will be treated to a delicious meal from Tina, Dave and friends. (Please let Tina Gascon know of any medical restrictions or food allergies).

Please RSVP by Sunday, March 3, 2024, at the latest at bethanyunitedmensclub@gmail.com.

For more information speak to Ian Parker, Randy Tyler, Tim Cormier, Doug Shields, or Jim Musgrave.

NEW MINISTRY GATHERING!

The Encouragers in Faith

**Thursdays @ 11:00 - 1:00pm,
in the MacKinnon Chapel**

March 7th to April 11th

Please bring a brown bag lunch.

If you wish to participate in this group, please contact Ann Bradley 902-455-0521 ext.227 or abradley@bethanyunitedchurch.ca.



Fellow Travelers

I was talking to Ann and Kevin about how I deeply miss small group gatherings, a safe place to discuss our different walks of faith. Ann and Kevin mentioned the Bethany Muffin Club, a group that has not met since COVID began. Perhaps you too would like to participate in such a group. I see our time of gathering to share thoughts and reflections prompted by an excerpt from a Daily Devotional reading, with prayer and a short meditation to be included. Although sharing would be encouraged, it is considered a best practice to use "I" when speaking, and not "you". As well, since some of this sharing could be personal in nature, anonymity will be stressed. I propose we name ourselves, "The Encouragers in Faith," and that we "give this a try" every **Thursday, 11:00 - 1:00pm, in the MacKinnon Chapel, March 7th to April 11th**, please bring a brown bag lunch if you wish. Later, we will review the experience and any suggestions for change will be addressed. As well, after the initial 6 weeks of meeting, we can find ways to share the facilitating role.

If you wish to participate in such a group, please contact Ann Bradley at abradley@bethanyunitedchurch.ca or 902-455-0521 ext.227.

With gratitude,

Valerie Doucette, Congregation Member



Bethany's "Bargain Bonanza" is Coming!

It's that time of year, folks! The Bethany Sunday School is getting ready to host the "Bargain Bonanza" on Saturday, May 25th, from 10 AM - 1 PM in the Fellowship Hall and gym. The children are excited to get started, and we need your help! Please keep us in mind as you're sorting through things this winter and as you begin your spring cleaning. We will begin accepting donations on Sunday, April 14th in the gym. You can drop things off before service from 9:30-10:15, or after service from 11:30-12:30. The last day for donations to come in is Sunday, May 19th. Keep an eye out for volunteer sign-up sheets in April. We're looking forward to hosting this fun event. Thank you and stay tuned!

Items to donate:

- **Small electronics and appliances:** clock radios, coffee makers, toaster ovens, Instant Pots, bread makers, slow cookers, etc.
- **Outdoor and Sports gear:** camping, skiing, hockey, baseball, croquet sets, boules, etc.
- **Tools:** hand tools, small power tools like saws, drills, etc.
- **Wall art**
- **Kitchen essentials:** dishes, cutlery, utensils, serving dishes and platters
- **Linens:** sheets, pillowcases, bathroom towels, tea towels, table cloths, cloth napkins, runners, table toppers, doilies, etc.
- **Books:** children's books; adult novels
- **Retro and Curio:** small home décor items such as lamps, vases, figurines, throw cushions, etc.
- **Accessories:** luggage, backpacks, purses, wallets
- **Christmas decorations**
- **Children's toys**

We ask that everything be clean, and in working order when it is dropped off. As you may remember from previous flea markets, there is a cost to the church if we have to dispose of items.

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